

# INTERFAITH WEDDING PLANNER

GARLITOS DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

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MOBILE  
APPLICATION  
REQUIREMENTS  
SPECIFICATIONS

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## SCOPE

## OVERVIEW

Interfaith Wedding Planners, Inc. requested the creation of a mobile application by Garlitos Design & Development that would present their education material on wedding customs from different religions and cultures, while also providing a platform to highlight their wedding planning services. The purpose of this document is to provide details on the specifications of the mobile application.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Interfaith Wedding Planner mobile application are as follows:

- To implement a mobile application that presents the wedding practices and rituals of six different religions in a portable and easy to digest manner. See Section C for further details.
- To motivate users to learn the wedding practices ahead of the wedding event they are attending through the use of push notifications.
- To provide a platform in which users will peruse and select various wedding practices and traditions from different religions to create an outline of their own interfaith marriage ceremony.

## USE CASES

The following uses cases are in-scope for the mobile application:

- **Present religions available to learn about.** The religions that must be presented are as follows:
  - Roman Catholicism
  - Protestant Christianity
  - Judaism
  - Hinduism
  - Islam
  - Buddhism
- **Present wedding traditions available to learn about.** The wedding tradition categories that must be presented are as follows:
  - Ceremonial Traditions
  - Dress & Attire
  - Food & Drink
  - Music & Dance
  - Symbols & Objects
  - Special Notes
- **Compare wedding traditions between two religions to facilitate interfaith wedding planning.** That is, a user must be able to select two religions and a shared category between the two religions, and review the content on the same screen. This should also provide a link to contact the Interfaith Wedding Planners website for help in combining faiths in a single wedding ceremony.

- **Allow users to insert wedding date and have application generate a study plan of various religions they wish to learn more about.** The application will leverage push notifications to remind users to read educational content within the application.

## LIMITATIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

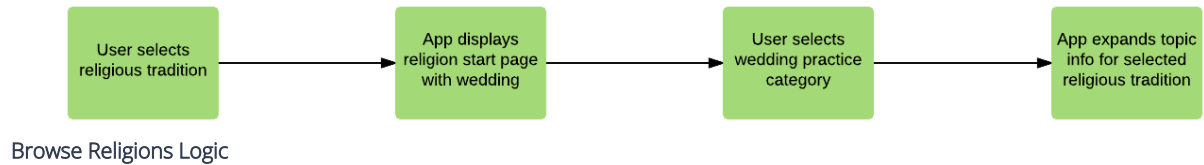
The limitations and assumptions of the Interfaith Wedding Guide mobile application are listed below:

- The religions supported by the mobile application include the following, for which Interfaith Wedding Planners, Inc. will provide the related content for:
  - Roman Catholicism
  - Protestant Christianity
  - Judaism
  - Hinduism
  - Islam
  - Buddhism
- The wedding traditions categories are limited to the following areas, for which Interfaith Wedding Planners, Inc. will provide the related content for:
  - Ceremonial Traditions
  - Dress & Attire
  - Food & Drink
  - Music & Dance
  - Symbols & Objects
  - Special Notes
- The mobile application design and development should allow for additional religions to be added without requiring significant re-design of the application. That is to say, the number of religions that the application should be able to scale up should the client decide to contract Garlitos Design & Development for additional religions to be added.
- The application is in American English only. However, interface and informational data will be implemented in a way that would allow for future localization. The application will also implement Unicode as allowed by the mobile operating system to allow for the application to support multiple languages.
- The application will be for USA users only as this is the primary market for Interfaith Wedding Planners.
- The mobile application will be designed for the iOS operations system and must operate on the iPhone 6/6s. The application will be designed in order to expand to the Apple iPad with minimal additional work should the client wish to expand the devices on which this application will operate.

## LOGIC REQUIREMENTS

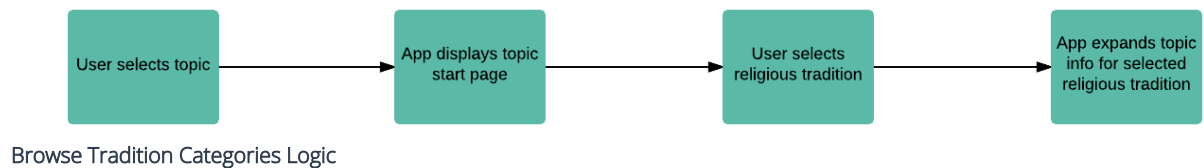
### BROWSE THE RELIGIONS AVAILABLE

Users will be presented with religions that are available for them to learn more about. The application must contain logic that allows users to select a religion (e.g., Hinduism) and then a wedding tradition (e.g., attire) they would like to learn more about.



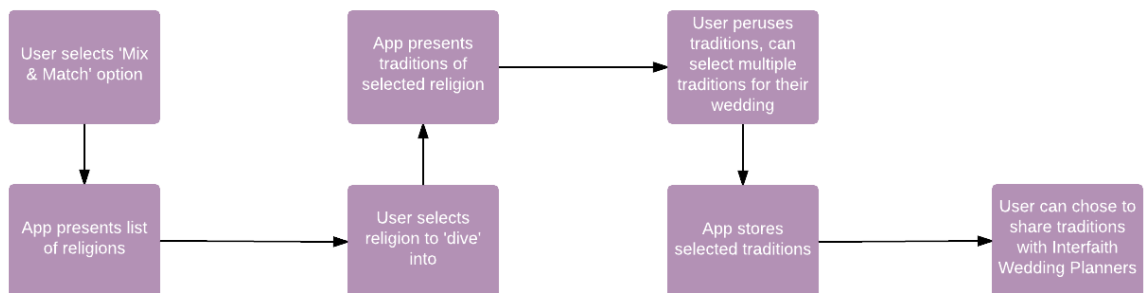
### BROWSE TOPICS AVAILABLE

Users must be able to view wedding traditions categories (e.g., attire) and browse the various traditions and see how they differ across different religions. Below is a diagram depicting the high-level logic for allowing a user to perform this action.



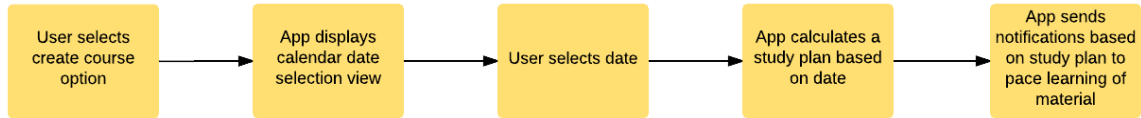
### MIX & MATCH WEDDING TRADITIONS FOR INTERFAITH WEDDING

Users must be able to select a religion and be presented with a list of the traditions. Users must also be able to select multiple traditions to create a collection of traditions they wish to have in their own wedding. Users must then be able to share this list with Interfaith Wedding Planners, Inc.'s wedding planners to facilitate the wedding planning discussion. Below is a diagram depicting the high-level logic for allowing a user to perform this action.



## CREATE COURSE PLAN

A user must be able to set a future date (e.g., the date of the wedding they are attending) that they would like to study all material related to a specific religion's wedding traditions by and have the mobile application create a study plan and send push notifications to remind the user to study a particular section of content according to the study plan. Below is a diagram depicting the high-level logic for allowing a user to perform this action.



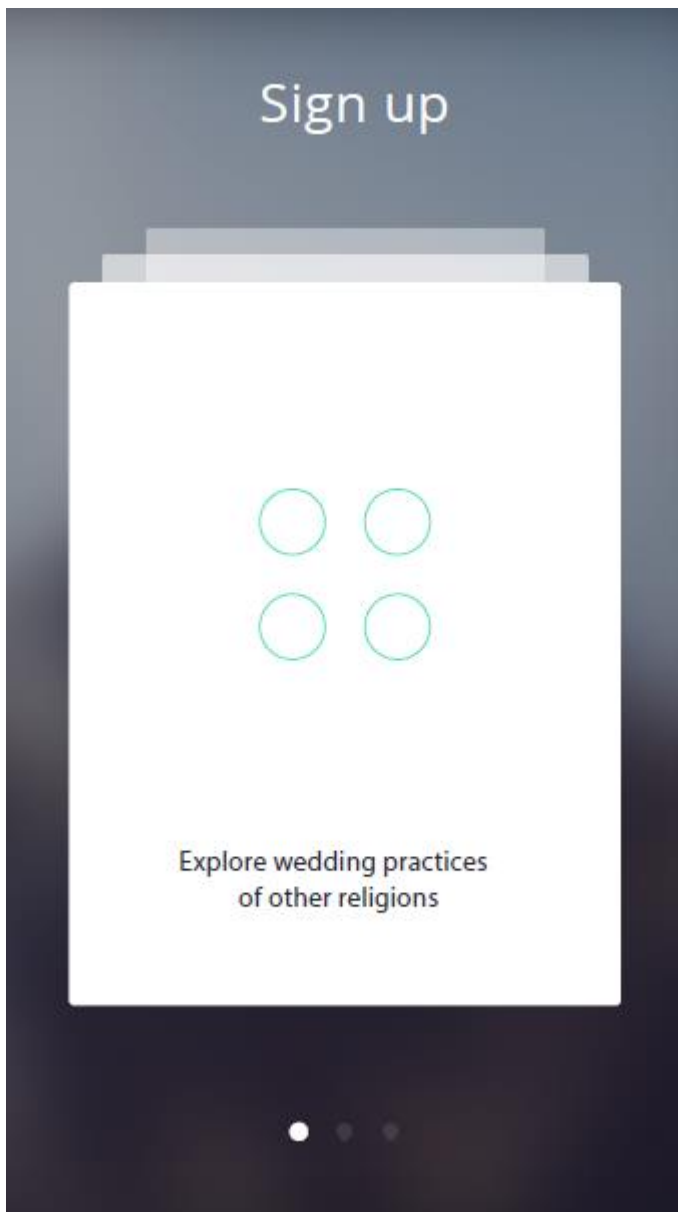


## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

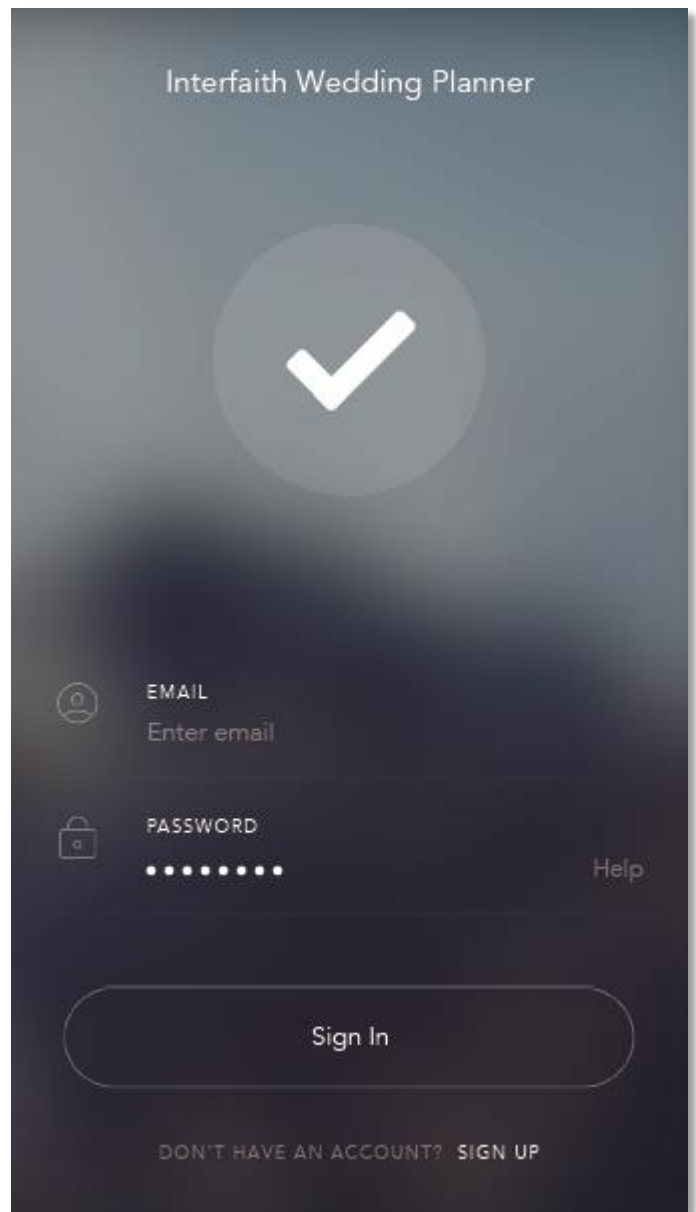
### GRAPHICAL USER INTERFACE REQUIREMENTS

The mobile application is built with a modular approach to the user interface. That is to say that the application will leverage basic building blocks that allow for the mobile application to scale up easily while keeping the user's experience consistent throughout the mobile application.

The basic building blocks of the user interface are presented below with short descriptions.



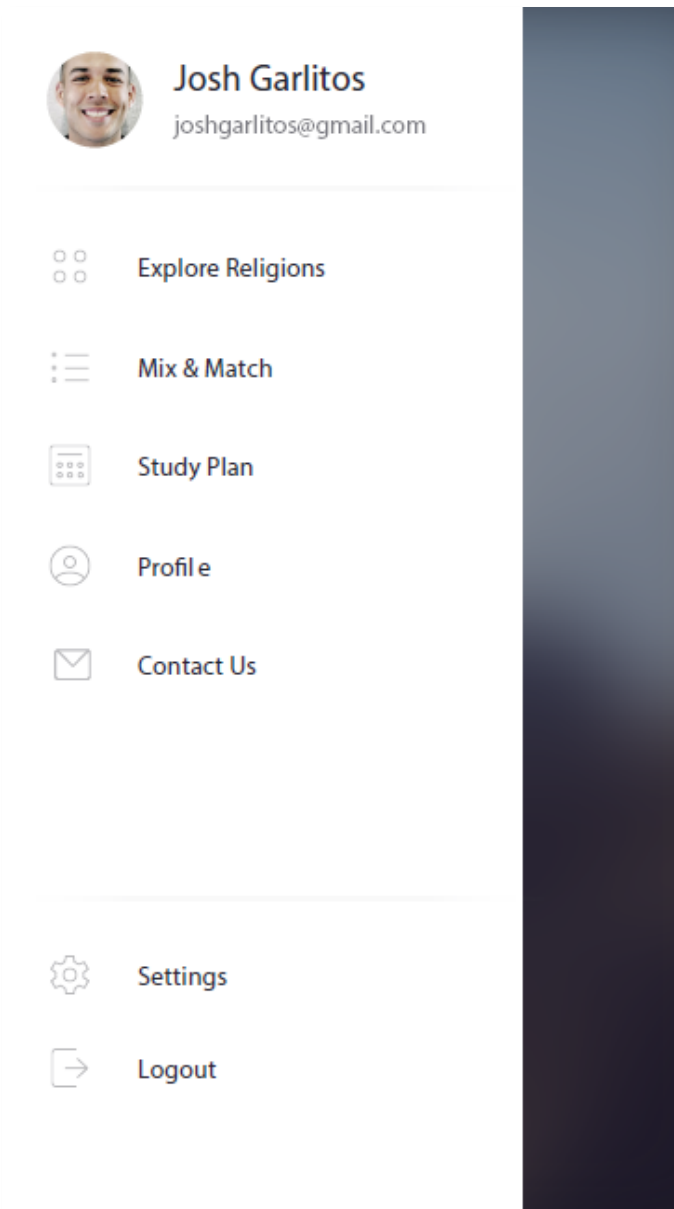
User Help Screen



User Log-In

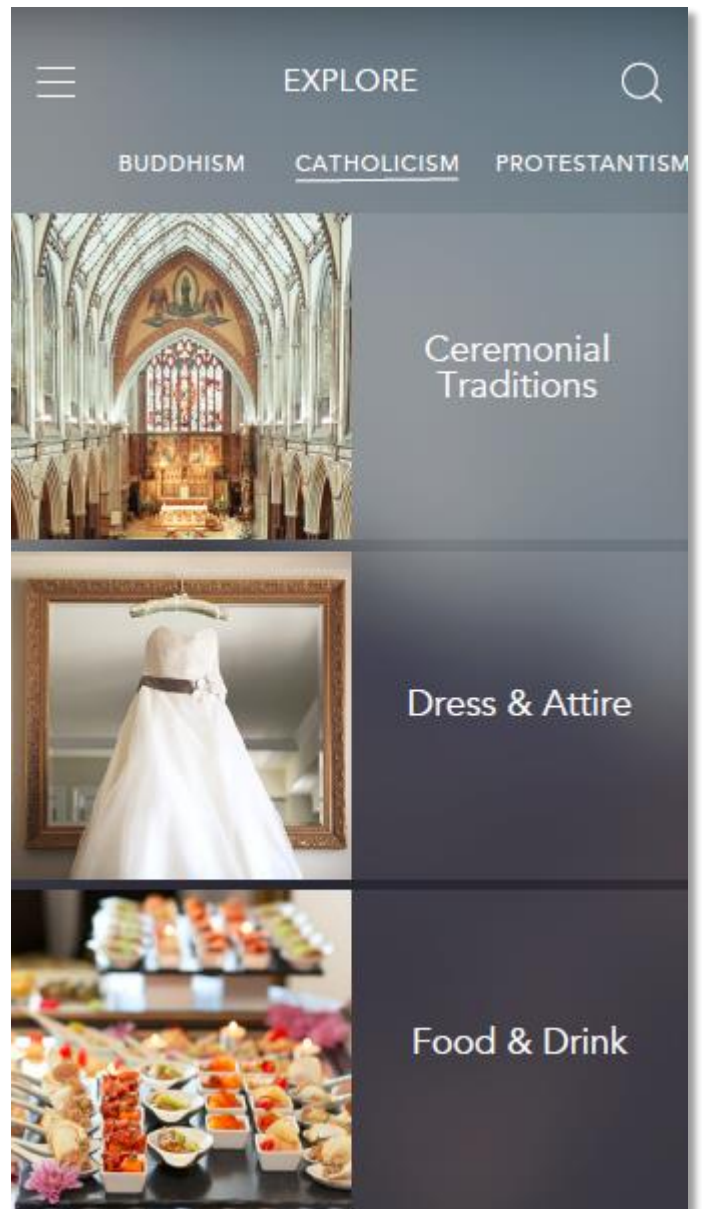
When users first download the app, they will be presented with a help screen that displays the features of the application and highlights the wedding planning services of Interfaith Wedding Planners.

When a user first downloads the mobile application, the user will be prompted to either sign-in or sign-up for an Interfaith Wedding Planner account.



### Menu Navigation

Users will be able to navigate the mobile application using a simple, always accessible menu. This menu navigation is also modular in that if Interfaith Wedding Planners would like to add additional features to the application in



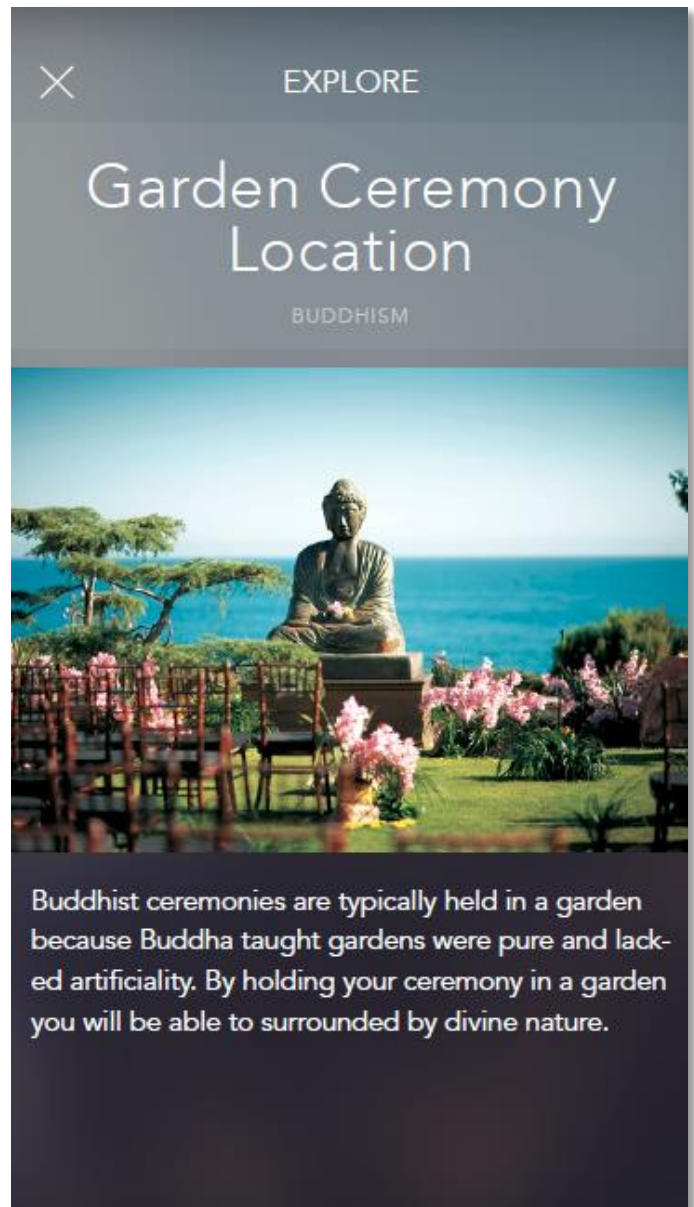
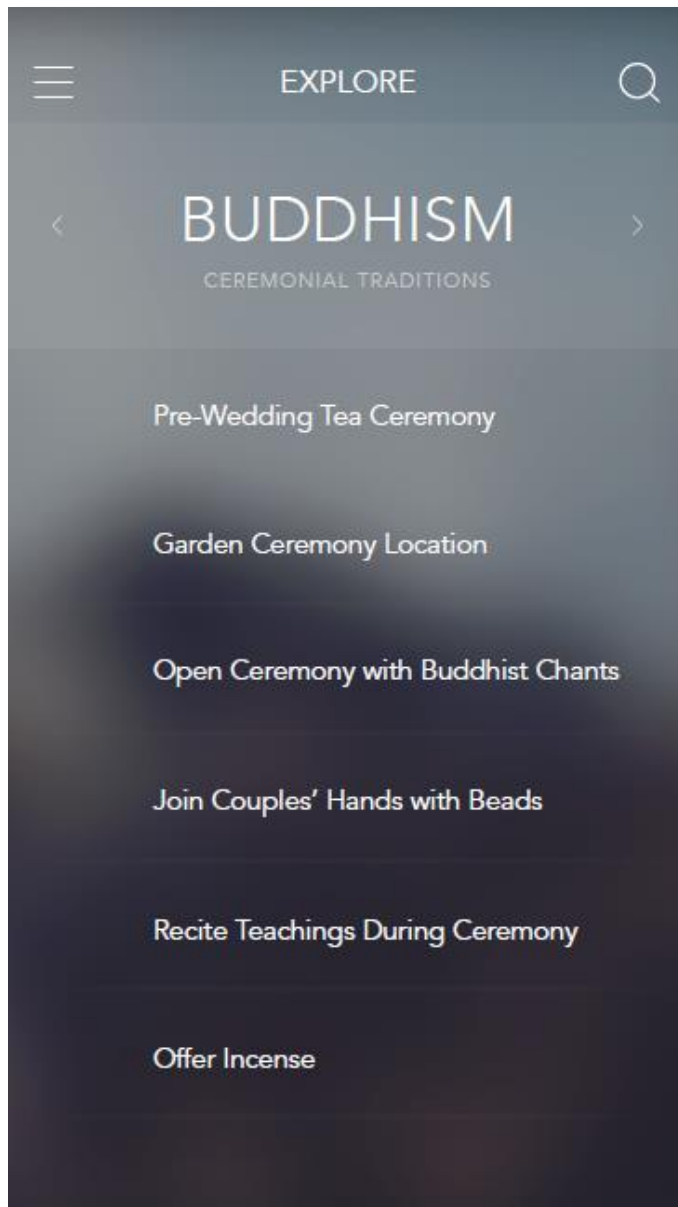
### Explore

Users will be able to explore various religions and their wedding traditions through the Explore feature. This design allows additional religions and categories to be added in future projects as needed. The design allows

future projects, it will be easy to incorporate them for users to access with minimal disruption to their expected interface.

users to drill down into areas to get more detail about a specific tradition.

Note: A selection screen like this would exist for every religion.



### Explore – Drill Down

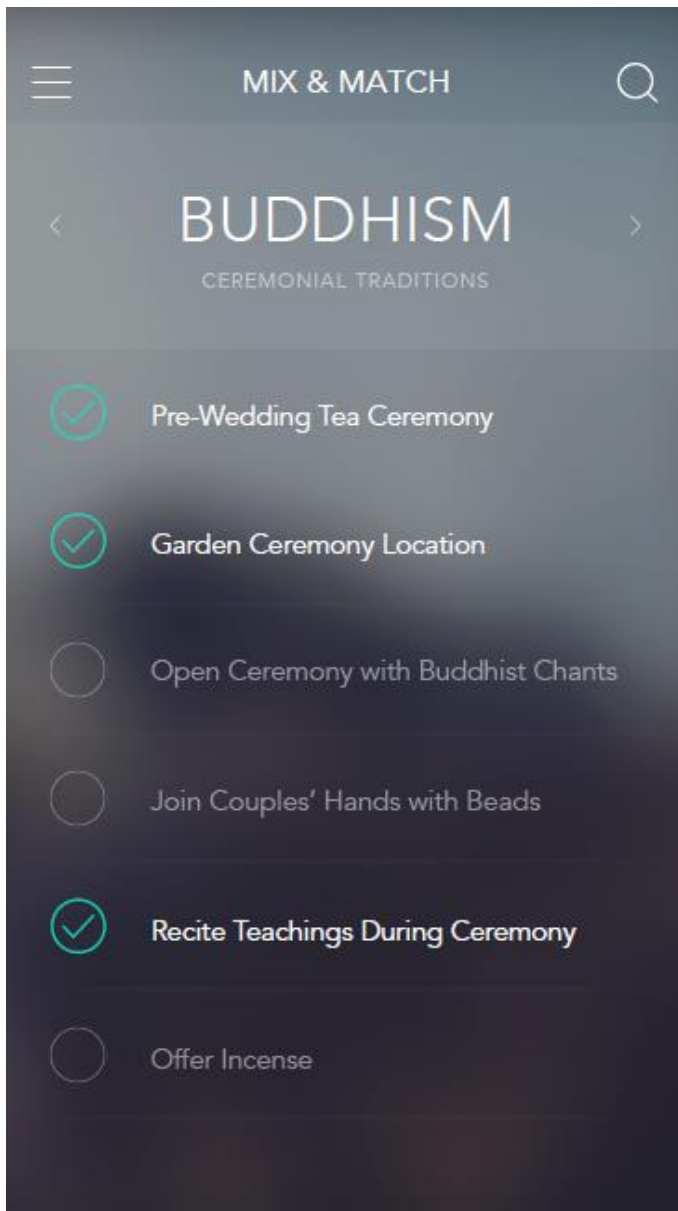
Users will be able to drill down into specific traditions to find out more about the different aspects of typical weddings in the religion they have selected. In the example above, a user has selected to learn more about Buddhism's Ceremonial Traditions.

Note: A selection screen like the one above would exist for every religion and the related categories of traditions.

### Explore

Users will be able to explore various religions and their wedding traditions through the Explore feature. This design allows additional religions and categories to be added in future projects as needed. The design allows users to drill down into areas to get more detail about a specific tradition. In this example above, a user has selected to learn more about Buddhism's ceremonial tradition of holding their weddings in gardens.

Note: A selection screen like this would exist for every specific tradition.



### Mix & Match

Users will be able to view a more concise list of wedding traditions per each religion and then select those which they would like to have in their own wedding through the Mix and Match feature. Users will then be able to save their choice and send them to Interfaith Wedding Planners to facilitate the wedding planning process.

## PERFORMANCE CONSTRAINTS

This mobile application will run locally using native code that will be installed and updated using the Apple App Store. It is expected that the mobile application's size will not exceed 30 MB and will require little processing power due to its light-weight, intuitive interface. As such, it is expected there will be little to no performance constraints related to the mobile application. This application will run on iOS 8 and above. Users that wish to use this application on lower versions of iOS must update their operating system accordingly.

## SECURITY

The mobile application will leverage best practices for consumer-facing mobile applications with regards to security. These best practices include using secure data storage for all user information, using tokens to user access processes, and using secure network transmissions of sensitive data.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

### SPECIFICATION DOCUMENTATION

- Requirements Specification Document (this document)
- Interface Design Plan (see 'Graphical User Interface Requirements' section above)
- Specific religious research information (see Appendix A).

### HELP / USER DOCUMENTATION

- The mobile application will show an introduction help screen when a user first installs the application. The help screen will walk the user through the basics of the mobile application and how to use the mobile application. Furthermore, within the mobile application menu there will be an option to re-open the help screen should the user need to be refreshed on the various aspects of the mobile application.

## FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS

### ADDITIONAL RELIGIONS

The mobile application should be designed to scale up for additional religions and localized into multiple languages. The application will also be designed to allow for the inclusion of additional wedding tradition categories other than those specified in the 'Use Cases' section.

### ADDITIONAL WEDDING TRADITION CATEGORIES

The mobile applications will be designed to scale up for additional wedding tradition categories as necessary. Any additional wedding tradition categories other than those specified in the 'Use Cases' section above are considered out of scope for this product.

## APPENDIX A: INTERFAITH WEDDING CONTENT

The content below should be presented through the mobile app. The content has been arranged in sections with titles that will be displayed through the mobile application user interface.

### PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

#### CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

##### PROCESSIONAL

The processional is the formal arrival of the bride at the ceremony. The bride is typically welcomed during the processional by the guests rising to their feet as she walks towards the aisle. The bride is often walked down the aisle by her father or a close relative or friend to the groom who is standing at the altar.

##### GIVING AWAY OF THE BRIDE

Typically, the father of the bride will give her away to the groom by walking her down the aisle during the processional. This symbolizes the passing of responsibility for the bride's well-being from her parents to her soon-to-be husband.

##### INVOCATION

Typically in a Protestant ceremony, the pastor presiding over the wedding ceremony will perform the Invocation. The invocation is to invoke the blessing of God on the marriage and will include biblical scriptures from the Old and New Testament as well as a sermon that highlights the need for a God-centered marriage.

##### BLESSING & EXCHANGE OF THE RINGS

The bride and groom will exchange rings during the wedding ceremony. The rings represent the bond of marriage that the couple has promised to keep for the rest of their lives before God. The minister presiding over the wedding ceremony will typically bless the rings as well. After the blessing of the rings, the rings are placed on the third finger of the left hand and are usually worn by the bride and groom for the rest of their lives.

##### PRONOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE

After the blessing and exchange of rings, the minister will often join the right hands of the couple and officially pronounce the union of the two before their guests. At this point the couple is considered officially a married couple.

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## CEREMONY LOCATION

Most Christian weddings are held in a Christian church building, but it is not uncommon for ceremonies to be held in other secular venues. If the ceremony is held in a church, weddings usually do not occur during the Holy Week, which is the week between Palm Sunday and Easter. Wedding ceremonies are typically followed by a reception during which guests of the wedding welcome the couple into their new state as a married couple.

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## DRESS & ATTIRE

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### WHITE WEDDING DRESS

Many brides wear a white wedding dress within Christian weddings. The white has come to symbolize the purity of the bride. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable in how to find the perfect wedding dress to represent your heritage, faith, and personal style.

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### WESTERN SUIT OR TUX

Many grooms will opt to wear a suit or a tux which are common formal wear in Western culture. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable in how to find the perfect menswear to represent your heritage, faith, and personal style.

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## FOOD & DRINK

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### CULTURAL FOOD

While there is no set menu for Protestant weddings, it is common for the bride and groom to create a menu that reflects their heritage and their personal preferences for food options for their guests. We at Interfaith Wedding Planners have plenty of menu options and are happy to discuss creating a special menu for your occasion.

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### FIRST SLICE OF WEDDING CAKE

It is common for Protestant weddings to celebrate the marriage of the couple by providing cake for their guests. The bride and groom will first cut a piece of cake for themselves and share this cake together before providing cake to their guests.

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## MUSIC & DANCE

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### PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

During the processional, during which the bridesmaids and bride walk down the central aisle of the church, it is common for *Wedding March* from *Lohengrin* by Wagner to be played. It is also common for songs or hymns that are important to the bride and groom to be played during the procession as well.

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### LIGHTING OF UNITY CANDLE

Some ceremonies involve the bride and groom each carrying a lit candle to the alter. They will use these candles to lit a central, larger candle, known as the unity candle, that sits on the alter. This joint lighting of a single candle represents the union of the couple in marriage.

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### RINGS

It is typical for the bride and groom to exchange rings during the ceremony. These rings will be worn for the remainder of the couple's married life together and symbolize the everlasting promise they have made to each other before God.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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### DENOMINATIONAL AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

While there are many common traditions across Protestant weddings, there are many important traditions that are unique to various cultures and denominations. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are skilled at integrating these traditions into your wedding and will be happy to help you honor these traditions in your own unique way.



### CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

#### PROCESSIONAL

The processional is the formal arrival of the bride at the ceremony. The bride is typically welcomed during the processional by the guests rising to their feet as she walks towards the aisle. The bride is often walked down the aisle by her father or a close relative or friend to the groom who is standing at the altar.

#### NUPTIAL MASS

Roman Catholic weddings often involve a nuptial mass. As such, the guests of the ceremony will participate in a Roman Catholic mass specially focused on the marriage of the couple and how the guests can support the couple in their marriage. The priest that is performing the ceremony will usually give a sermon related to marriage and how the guests of the wedding can support the couple's marriage.

#### OPENING PRAYER

The nuptial mass is usually opened by a prayer from the priest. This prayer will ask for God to hear the prayers of the couple on their wedding day, to strength the couples bond in marriage, and to request God's blessing.

#### VOWS

While there are many ways that vows can be done, there are some common options:

The entire congregation of wedding guests will stand while the couple make their intention of life-long commitment to each other, known as their wedding vows. It is common for the priest to ask the couple the something similar to the following to seal the couple's commitment to each other before God:

Do you take \_\_\_\_\_ for your lawful wife/husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do you part?

After the couple answers with, "I do," the couple will drink from the same goblet which signifies their everlasting bond in Jesus Christ.

#### EXCHANGE OF RINGS

After the couple has said their vows, the couple will exchange rings. These rings signify the everlasting bond of the couple and the couple will usually wear these rings for the rest of their lives.

#### COMMUNION

Many Roman Catholic weddings will also include communion for the couple and their guests. The purpose of holding communion during a wedding is to recognize the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

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## CEREMONY LOCATION

Usually the wedding ceremony will occur in the bride's church, while the groom's church will put a special notice about the marriage of the groom at his church. These notices of an upcoming wedding are known as banns, and are usually published three times prior to the actual wedding date.

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## DRESS & ATTIRE

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### WHITE WEDDING DRESS

Many brides wear a white wedding dress within Christian weddings. The white has come to symbolize the purity of the bride. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable in how to find the perfect wedding dress to represent your heritage, faith, and personal style.

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### WESTERN SUIT OR TUX

Many grooms will opt to wear a suit or a tux which are common formal wear in Western culture. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable in how to find the perfect menswear to represent your heritage, faith, and personal style.

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## FOOD & DRINK

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### COMMUNION OF BREAD & WINE

It is common for Roman Catholic weddings to include communion as part of the nuptial mass. As such, during the ceremony, sacramental bread and wine or grape juice would be used in communion. It should be noted that it is only appropriate for Roman Catholics to participate in this tradition, as only those who have been baptized within the Roman Catholic Church are allowed to participate in communion.

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### FIRST SLICE OF WEDDING CAKE

It is common for Protestant weddings to celebrate the marriage of the couple by providing cake for their guests. The bride and groom will first cut a piece of cake for themselves and share this cake together before providing cake to their guests.

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## MUSIC & DANCE

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### PROCESSIONAL MUSIC

During the processional, during which the bridesmaids and bride walk down the central aisle of the church, it is common for *Wedding March* from *Lohengrin* by Wagner to be played.

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### LIGHTING OF UNITY CANDLE

Some ceremonies involve the bride and groom each carrying a lit candle to the alter. They will use these candles to lit a central, larger candle, known as the unity candle, that sits on the alter. This joint lighting of a single candle represents the union of the couple in marriage. It should be noted that this is not a standard practice and some parishes do not allow this.

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### RINGS

It is typical for the bride and groom to exchange rings during the ceremony. These rings will be worn for the remainder of the couple's married life together and symbolize the everlasting promise they have made to each other before God.

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### COMMUNION BREAD AND WINE

During the communion ceremony, guests will eat a piece of unleavened bread and drink wine. The bread is believed to be the body of Christ and the wine is the blood of Christ.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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### CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

While many Roman Catholic traditions are common across cultures, many cultures have their own traditions that are part of their Roman Catholic wedding ceremonies. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable and skilled at integrating these important traditions as you wish to ensure your wedding ceremony reflects your individual heritage.

## CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

### AUSPICIOUS TIMING OF WEDDING

It is often important to choose an auspicious date for the wedding to occur. Often these dates are selected by a lama, or Buddhist teacher, who will perform a study of signs, almanacs, and other religious sources to find the luckiest day for the wedding to occur for the couple.

### BLESSING FROM BUDDHA

Before the wedding ceremony, the bride and groom will go to the temple separately to ask Buddha for blessings from Buddha in their future marriage.

### GARDEN

Buddhist ceremonies are typically held in a garden because Buddha taught that gardens had no artificiality and thus allows people to be surrounded by divine nature.

### TEA CEREMONY

A week before the wedding ceremony, Buddhist couples will meet at a ritualistic tea ceremony, accompanied by a third party host. This is an opportunity for the couple to spend quiet time alone before the joining of their two families.

## DRESS & ATTIRE

### WHITE CLOTHES

Both the groom and the bride usually wear white. The bride usually wears a simple white dress and the groom will wear a simple white tunic.

## FOOD & DRINK

### ASSIMILATES WITH NATIVE CULTURE

Within the Buddhist religion, wedding ceremonies are often seen as civil ceremonies that Buddhist monks can be part of. As such, food and drink tends to match that of which the local culture would eat for celebrations.

## MUSIC & DANCE

### BUDDIST CHANTS

Often Buddhist weddings are started and ended with religious chants from Buddhist monks. While having monks at the wedding is not required, if monks are present at the wedding they will chant blessings for the couple and their marriage.

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### PORUWA

The wedding ceremony often occurs on a platform beneath a white silk canopy, known as a *poruwa*. This canopy is decorated with flowers and flowers are arranged around the platform as well.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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### BUDDHISM ASSIMILATES WITH NATIVE CULTURE

Within the Buddhist religion, wedding ceremonies are often seen as civil ceremonies that Buddhist monks can be part of. As such, much of Buddhist wedding traditions incorporate the local culture and the religious aspects will adapt to the local wedding practices. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are skilled in integrating Buddhist tradition into your wedding in a way that enhances your special day.

## CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

*SAGAN* – ACCEPTANCE OF MARRIAGE

The *sagan* ceremony is a ceremony of acceptance of the wedding by both families of the bride and groom and will precede all other parts of the wedding. The ceremony occurs at the groom's home and the bride's father will mark the groom's forehead with a mix of saffron, rice, and flower petals. Relatives of the bride will offer the groom blessings and gifts, and then will take the groom to another location where he will meet the bride. The *sagan* is followed by celebrations known as *sangeets* that are full of singing and dancing.

## KANYADAAN – ENTRUSTING OF THE DAUGHTER

The family of the bride will consent for the bride to be married to the groom. The curtain within the *mandap* is then lowered which previously was separating the bride and groom.

*PANI-GRADANA* – PROMISES TO CHERISH EACH OTHER

During this part of the Hindu wedding, the parent of the bride offers the bride's hand to the groom and asks him to accept the woman as his wife. The groom will then take her hand, thus accepting the woman as his wife and will present her with presents of jewelry and clothing. At this point in the ceremony, the sacred fire, known as *Agni*, is lit and invoked.

## SHILAROHANA – BRIDE STEPS ON STONE

During this second stage of a Hindu wedding, the groom will ask the bride to stamp her right foot as hard as she can onto a stone. This stamping of the stone represents that their union will be strong and firm in the face of future difficulties together.

*LAJA HOMA* – OFFERING RICE TO SACRED FIRE

After *Shilarohana*, the bride's brother will give the bride parched rice, which signifies that he is her lifelong supporter in her marriage. The bride and groom will place parched rice into the sacred fire as an offering. The bride will pray to the god of death, Yama, for long life, prosperity, and happiness for the groom.

*AGNI PAROKRAMA* - CIRCLING THE SACRED FIRE

Hindus believe the bride is under the protection of the moon for the first seven years of her marriage, under the protection of the sun for the next seven years, and then the following seven are overseen by fire. The couple will walk around the sacred fire four times, of which the groom will lead for the first three times. This circling of the fire is known as *Agni Parokrama*. On the fourth time around the fire, the bride will lead and the couple takes seven steps around the fire and at each step, the couple will ask for blessings of food, prosperity, happiness,

family, strength, and lifelong friendship. These seven steps are known as *Saptapadi* and at the completion of these seven steps the bride and groom are considered a married couple.

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#### SAUBHGYA CHINHA – BLESSING THE BRIDE

After circling the sacred fire, the groom will bless the bride with *kumkum* or *sindur* on her forehead and give her a sacred necklace known as Mangle-sutra. The groom will then take the bride outside into the sun, accepting her as his wife. If the wedding is performed at night, the groom and bride will look up at the *Dhruva*, the star of steadfastness, or *Arundhati*, the star of devotion. The bride will look at these stars and promise to be as steadfast as these stars

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#### HARIDAYA-SPARSH – TOUCHING OF HEARTS

The bride and groom will touch each other's hearts and vow, "I touch thy heart unto mine. God has given thee as my husband/wife. May my heart be thine and thy heart be mine now. When I talk to thee, please listen to me with perfect attention."

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#### PURNAHUTI – CLOSING OFFERING

To close the ceremony, the couple will offer further sacrifices to Agni, the sacred fire. After these final offerings, the guests of the wedding are offered rice and flowers who use these items to shower the newly married couple with their blessings.

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### DRESS & ATTIRE

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#### CHUDA – BRIDE'S PREPARATION CEREMONY

The bride will get prepared for the ceremony with the help of a holy man, known as a *pandit*. The *pandit* will lead the bride's guests in prayers and then each of her guests will touch the set of ivory and gold bangles that the bride will wear during her wedding ceremony. The *pandit* will help her put these bangles on along with an iron bangle for good luck. Family members of the bride will then tie gold and silver jewelry, known as *kaliras*, to the bride's wrists. As the bride is leaving the *chuda*, she will hit one of the female guests with the *kaliras*, which is meant to foreshadow who will get married next.

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#### SEANT – GROOM'S PREPARATION CEREMONY

Similar to the bride's *chuda*, the groom has a ceremony of his own as he gets ready for the wedding. The groom will wear a pink turban that is touched by all the guests attending his *seant*. Then the groom's father will tie a veil decorated in flowers and gold to the groom's face and all the guests will also touch this veil. The groom will then mount a horse and ride the horse to the wedding ceremony.

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#### SAREE & LEHENGA

Brides will typically wear a *saree* or a *lehenga* for their wedding ceremony. Red is considered the luckiest color and as such, red is a common color for a bride's saree.

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### DHOTI & KURTA

It is common for the groom to wear a dhoti, which is a rectangular cloth that is wrapped around the legs and knotted at the waist. It is also common for grooms to wear a *kurta*, which is a collarless shirt, with a *dhoti*.

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### HENNA

Henna is a dark, reddish-orange dye that is used to decorate and adorn the skin. The leaves of the Egyptian privet are crushed into a green powder and water is added to make a paste that is then directly applied to the skin. This paste will then dye the skin a dark orange/brown color. Black henna can be made by adding powdered lime and powdered crystal ammoniac, which causes the normally orange paste to turn black. Black henna is sometimes used and is only applied to the soles of the feet and on the hands. These markings from black henna last much longer, about 20 to 30 days, which is longer than the normal two to three weeks that orange henna will last. Henna is used to beautify and decorate the hands and feet of brides with intricate patterns.

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## FOOD & DRINK

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### CULTURAL FOOD

While there is no set menus for Hindu weddings, it is typical for Hindu weddings to feature foods common to the native culture of the bride and groom's families. For example, if the families originate from Northern India, they may have meat dishes featured, while Hindu families from South India would likely not have meat dishes as it is more common for these families to be vegetarians. We as Interfaith Wedding Planners have plenty of menu options and are happy to discuss creating a special menu for your occasion.

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## MUSIC & DANCE

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### BARAAT – GROOM'S PROCESSION

It is common for there to be a large celebration when the groom arrives at the ceremony. This celebration and the entering of the groom is known as the *baraat*. This celebration is typically filled with lots of music, especially using a dholki drum, and guests will perform many dances during this celebration.

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### MANDAP

The marriage ceremony is usually conducted under a wooden structure known as a *mandap*. It is usually constructed especially for the marriage rites.

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### AGNI - SACRED FIRE



Agni is fire that is lit during the first part of the wedding is symbolizes the mouth of Vishnu and symbolizes the illumination of the mind and happiness. The couple will pour oblations into the fire during the wedding ceremony.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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### SEVERAL DAY LONG CELEBRATION

It is not uncommon Hindu wedding celebrations to be a multi-day event with the bride, groom, their families and guests celebrating for 3-7 days. Often there will be multiple locations at which events take place and different families may host various aspects of the celebration. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners is skilled in coordinating all of the logistics while incorporating traditions that are important for your wedding and are happy to help with this.

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## CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

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### MEHENDI CEREMONY

A *mehendi* ceremony is akin to a bridal shower in Western culture, in that it precedes the wedding ceremony and celebrates the bride's upcoming betrothal. The bride and her other female members of her family and her female friends will decorate their hands and feet with *mehendi*. Guests will play games, sing songs together, and dance together. It is also common for the *mehendi* ceremony to coincide with the *dholki* celebration.

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### MEHER – GIFT TO THE BRIDE

A *meher* is monetary amount that the groom promises to give the bride that comes in two parts. The first part comes before the consummation of the marriage and the second part is given to the bride throughout her life.

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### NIKAH – SIGNING OF MARRIAGE CONTRACT

A marriage contract is all that is required for a Muslim couple to be married. The signing of this contract is performed in a *nikah* ceremony, in which the groom proposes to the bride in front of witnesses. The groom and the bride will say "*qabul*", which means "I accept" in Arabic, three times to evidence they are marrying upon their own free will. The couple and their witnesses will then sign the marriage contract. The couple will also sometimes share a sweet fruit upon signing the contract.

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### VOWS ARE OPTIONAL

It is possible to include a religious ceremony with the *nikah*. Usually this involves reciting the *Fatihah*, which is the first chapter of the Quran. Most Muslims do not recite vows but rather they have their officiant speak about marriage and their responsibilities to Allah and each other.

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## DRESS & ATTIRE

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### HENNA

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### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Not all Muslim cultures have typical wedding ceremony and related attire. Usually attire reflects that of the local culture. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable of these customs and are happy to discuss how to incorporate these traditions into your wedding.

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## FOOD & DRINK

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### WALIMAH FEAST

Muslim weddings must be declared publically, and one way that many couples achieve this publicity is through holding a large feast known as a *walimah*. The specific purpose of a wedding *walimah* feast is to announce that the couple is married and occurs after the *nikah*.

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### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Not all Muslim cultures have typical wedding ceremony and related food and drink. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable of these customs and are happy to discuss how to incorporate these traditions into your wedding.

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## MUSIC & DANCE

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### DHOLKI

Dholki is a celebration common with Muslims from India and Pakistan, but is now becoming more common among Muslims of all cultures. This celebration precedes the signing of the marriage contract. A dholki is a drum, which is played at the celebration and guests sing and dance together.

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### LOCAL CUSTOMS

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Not all Muslim cultures have an elaborate wedding ceremony aside from the signing of a marriage contract in Islam. A couple is considered married upon signing a marriage contract and receptions can follow celebrating the marriage depending on the local customs. As such, there are many aspects of weddings that come more specifically from the local culture. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable about these customs and are happy to discuss how to incorporate these traditions into your wedding.

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## SPECIAL NOTES

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## LOCAL CUSTOMS

Not all Muslim cultures have an elaborate wedding ceremony aside from the signing of a marriage contract in Islam. A couple is considered married upon signing a marriage contract and receptions can follow celebrating the marriage depending on the local customs. As such, there are many aspects of weddings that come more specifically from the local culture. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are knowledgeable about these customs and are happy to discuss how to incorporate these traditions into your wedding.

## CEREMONIAL TRADITIONS

SIGNING OF THE *KETUBAH*

Before the bride and groom are married, the groom will read a marriage contract known as a *ketubah*. The *ketubah* details the duties of the husband to provide food, clothing and conjugal rights. The *ketubah*, once signed by the groom, will be read to the bride during the ceremony.

## BEDEKEN - VEILING OF THE BRIDE

The bride will normally wear a veil. On the day of the wedding ceremony, in a ceremony known as *bedeken*, the groom will be escorted to the bride's room where he will confirm that she is the correct bride and then place a veil on her head that she will then wear for the remainder of the ceremony. This tradition comes from the Old Testament story of Jacob being tricked into marrying the wrong woman. The rabbi will then bless the bride.

## KIDUSHIN – BETROTHAL CEREMONY

Under the *huppah*, the bride will walk around the groom seven times. This symbolizes the story of creation in which God is believed to have created the world in seven days and how the bride and groom will create a new family together. The bride and groom, as part of *kidushin*, or the betrothal ceremony, will sip from the same cup of wine. This symbolizes how the bride and groom are going to share the same "cup of life" in their marriage together. The groom will then place a ring on the index finger of the bride's right hand and the *ketubah*, which the groom had signed earlier, is read aloud.

## NISSUIN – MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Following *kidushin*, *nissuin*, the marriage ceremony occurs. During the marriage ceremony, known as *nissuin*, which takes place under the *huppah*, seven blessings are said over a cup of wine to seal the marriage of the bride and groom.

## BREAKING OF THE GLASS

*Nissuin* is closed by the breaking of glass under the heel of the groom. This breaking of the glass symbolizes the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. This serves as a reminder for the couple to place Jerusalem above their own happiness and a reminder of the sorrows of Israel.

## YICHUD - TIME OF SECLUSION

Following the marriage ceremony, the groom and bride will go to the bride's room for a moment of privacy and seclusion of the wedding guests, known as the *yichud*. It is also customary for the bride and groom to fast on their wedding day and it is during the *yichud* that the couple will break their fast.

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## DRESS & ATTIRE

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### WHITE WEDDING DRESS

Jewish brides will typically wear a white wedding dress for their wedding. White symbolizes spiritual purity and this purity ties into the idea that a wedding serves as a personal *Yom Kippur*, a time of repentance and cleansing, for the bride and groom.

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## FOOD & DRINK

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### CHALLAH BREAD

It is common for *challah*, a large, braided egg bread, to be served to wedding guests following the wedding ceremony. The *challah* is blessed by the groom and bride and then brought to each table of guests attending the wedding.

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### KOSHER FOOD

It is typical for all food served at a Jewish wedding to be kosher, which involves various restrictions on the preparation and serving of the food. One example of kosher restrictions is that pork is not to be served at the wedding. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are skilled with creating a delicious and unique kosher menu for your wedding.

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## MUSIC & DANCE

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### HORA – DANCE OF CELEBRATION

Often a dance of celebration, known as *hora*, is done following the wedding ceremony. During this dance, the bride and groom are lifted up on chairs by their wedding guests. There is no traditional time for this dance to occur, just when the wedding guests' spirit strikes them to start this celebration.

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## SYMBOLS & OBJECTS

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### HUPPAH – CANOPY

Jewish wedding ceremonies typically take place under a *huppah*, which is a canopy that symbolizes the new household the couple will make. The *huppah* is open on all four sides which represents hospitality. Furthermore, the *huppah* will be plain and not be decorated which symbolizes that it is not the material things that make a strong marriage, but rather it is spiritual richness that makes a strong marriage.

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### GLASS

The glass that is broken at the end of the marriage ceremony represents the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and serves as a reminder for the couple to place needs of Jerusalem and Israel before their own.

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ORTHODOX, CONSERVATIVE AND REFORM JUDAISM

There are several differences and nuances based on the specific denomination of Judaism that one may follow. Our team at Interfaith Wedding Planners are skilled in these differences and are happy to guide you through integrating these practices in your wedding.